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13 December 2012

Mrs Angela Ewing  
Headteacher  
North Downs Primary School  
Wheelers Lane  
Betchworth  
Surrey  
RH3 7LA

Dear Mrs Ewing

### **Requires improvement first monitoring inspection visit of North Downs Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 12 December 2012 I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

This monitoring inspection visit was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, a group of governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, the school improvement advisor from the local authority commissioned school improvement partner, subject leaders for mathematics and English and a group of pupils. Brief visits were made to classrooms, and the school's improvement plan was evaluated.

### **Context**

There have been no significant changes in the school since the previous inspection.

### **Main findings**

The headteacher and senior leaders are tackling the areas requiring improvement with conviction. The school development plan centres firmly on raising pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics, and on improving teaching, as it did at the time of the section 5 inspection. While overall goals are clear, the actions intended

to improve teaching and the work of subject leaders are not all detailed enough to ensure they are understood by everyone, and that the impact on pupils can be checked. It is also unclear how pupils' progress over time will be better monitored, including by governors, to ensure they reach challenging targets by Year 6.

Staff development is well focused on enhancing teaching, based on regular monitoring led by the headteacher. There is a growing realisation among staff that teaching can only be judged as good when pupils make good progress over time. Teachers are becoming more aware of the need to ensure pupils' work builds on what they already know, and challenges all pupils with well-paced activities. Much effort is rightly going into ensuring pupils' progress is tracked accurately to identify those needing extra support. Teachers are starting to provide better opportunities for writing and to engage pupils in setting their own targets. Support from external consultants and the senior team is boosting subject leaders' skills in monitoring and leading their areas. Governors are sharpening their focus on achievement. Useful training for them on data analysis is underway from school staff and local authority personnel, and is helping them ask more probing questions about pupils' progress.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further steps are taken to sharpen the development plan so it shows:

- more detail about the actions to improve teaching and the impact of subject leaders, how these will benefit pupils and how this will be checked
- how staff and governors will check the progress of different year groups toward long term goals so these are hit and teachers are held to account for their impact.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The headteacher and school improvement advisor have coordinated a range of useful support for the school. This includes work with English and mathematics consultants and is helping raise the quality of teaching, as well as the school's capacity to improve itself. There are suitable plans for further input, including for governors, and for monitoring the impact of what is provided.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey and as below.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Long  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**